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WAR FOOD ADMINISTRATION

Office of Distribution

Marketing Reports Division

821 Market Street - Room 700

San Francisco 3, California

Western Region

FOR ADMINISTRATIVE USE

HIGHLIGHTS FROM MARKET NEWS REVIEWS

Week Ending May 5, 1944

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

Asparagus - Interstate shipments of California asparagus to date, this season, are still behind those of last year by the same date by 292 cars and the peak has been passed. This year's shipments for California now total 1609 cars compared to 1901 cars in 1943 and 1710 cars for the United States. In 1943 the U.S. shipments totaled 2015 by May 5th. Shipments out of South Carolina total 124 cars compared to 60 cars in 1943.

Prices for loose green medium to large "grass" closed this week, in the main western wholesale markets, on a range from 6 cents to 9 cents per pound.

Lettuce - Shipments of lettuce from the Western Region states of Arizona and California this week have totaled 1898 cars with 1867 of them originating in central California counties. Shipments out of Arizona and California for the same seven days last year totaled 1676 cars. Shipping point f.o.b. sales on Salinas, California lettuce, were reported today as \$3.00 to \$3.10 per crate of 4 to 5 dozen with top icing extra. Similar sales reported on the same date last year were \$4.50 per crate.

Potatoes - New potato shipments for the U.S. to date this year are almost double those of last year for the same period; being 7311 cars compared to 4145 cars. Florida has shipped 4453 cars of this year's crop, Texas 1311 cars and California 819 cars. Last year's shipments for the same states through May 5th were 1708, 1047, and 1337 cars respectively. California shipments show less this year due to the late season.

F.o.b. shipping point prices, for Kern County, California, new potatoes closed this week at \$3.75 per 100 lbs. U. S. No. 1 with demand exceeding the supply.

Cherries - Cherries from Sacramento Valley, California are now reaching local markets at wholesale prices ranging from 35¢ upward to 45¢ per lb. The varieties are Purple Guigne and Chapman.

GRAIN PRODUCTS

Alfalfa - Wet and cold weather conditions in the alfalfa producing sections of Kansas and Nebraska have resulted in slow growth of alfalfa, and wet fields and roads have interfered with baling and loading operations. In the west the second crop cutting is well under way and the weather is generally favorable for good growth on the third crop.

U.S. No. 1 alfalfa in Kansas City and in Los Angeles was quoted at \$31.50 to \$33.50 per ton, and U. S. No. 2 at \$25.50 to \$28.00 in Kansas City and \$29.00 to \$31.00 in Los Angeles.

Rice - In the California rice belt planting is estimated to be about 50 percent completed and another ten days should complete the seeding. Some of the earlier plantings are now appearing above the water and continued warm weather should result in good growth. The Glenn-Colusa district has increased last year's plantings by about 11 percent.

Wheat - Trading in wheat this last week continued light because of limited supplies of both wheat and other grain feeds which were greatly exceeded by demand. The nine principal wheat markets have reported receiving, this week, 58 percent more wheat than last week but about 35 percent less than that received the same week a year ago.

The wheat crop in the North and Northwest spring and winter wheat sections is reported as "showing" up good although in some sections spring seeding is still held up due to wet weather.

DAIRY AND POULTRY

Butter production in the west this last week was up 2 percent over the previous week, but 14 percent below production for the same week a year ago. For the United States last week's production moved up 4 percent over the previous week although it remained 13 percent under that of a year ago.

Although more butter was available, increased buying as a result of the discontinuance of meat ration points and the lowering of points on butter, left no surplus on the Western markets.

Eggs - The Western wholesale markets this last week reflected continued heavy supplies of eggs particularly of the small sizes for which there appeared to be little or no outlet. Western wholesale prices on Friday for Large Grade A eggs covered a range from 33½ to 39 cents per dozen and on Small Grade A, from 21 to 25 cents per dozen. These prices reflected no change over those of a week earlier.

LIVESTOCK AND MEATS

Hogs - Toward the end of the week marketing of hogs in the twelve principal markets was brought more nearly under control as the result of embargoes on shipments. Producers are now being asked to spread out marketing as much as possible over the coming weeks in order to help reduce possibilities of congested marketing conditions.

It appears that many producers have felt that support prices would be lowered on May 15 when the OPA ceiling price will be reduced 75 cents per cwt. on hogs over 240 lbs. This opinion is not shared by the WFA.

Sheep - Feed conditions which were somewhat improved a week ago by rains have again become very short for the California lamb crop, except for southern California, particularly San Diego County. The movement of the crop through the Intermountain Gateways the last 15 days this year has been approximately 70 percent greater than for the same period last year. California lambs this week have brought on western markets a top price of \$15.00 per cwt.

Arizona lambs of above average quality and weight are being sold to southern California buyers. About 75 percent of that States spring crop has been so moved.